

NOTEWORTHY COLLECTION

CALIFORNIA

STREPTANTHUS CORDATUS Nutt. VAR. *CORDATUS* (BRASSICACEAE). — Siskiyou Co., County Road 17 (FR 42N17) to Mt Eddy, 41° 14' 37.896", -122° 07' 06.24", road cut, June 15, 2018 (JEPS105539). Small groups and individuals of *S. cordatus* var. *cordatus* (hereafter referred to as *S. cordatus*) grow on the road cut for 1-2 km. Hundreds of plants are present from late May through June only a few meters from the road.

Previous knowledge. Prior to this discovery, the western-most location for *S. cordatus* var. *cordatus* was Magalia, Butte Co., CA (CAS-BOT-BC1285 J.T. Howell). Although this occurrence of *S. cordatus* is on serpentinite-derived soil and in the partial shade of an open pine forest, *S. cordatus* thrives in many different habitats and substrates (O'Donnell, personal observation). According to the Flora of North America (Al-Shehbaz 2010), *S. cordatus* is widespread and abundant in the juniper-piñon woodlands, sagebrush and open pine forests, from Colorado, Wyoming, Utah, Idaho, Nevada, Arizona and New Mexico, west to California and north to eastern Oregon. I have seen it as far north as Canyon Mountain in northeastern Oregon growing in serpentinite-derived soil, and several places nearby. In the northern Warner Mountains, just south of the Oregon border, *S. cordatus* grows along the road to Lily Lake in volcanic talus. In southeastern Oregon, it grows in volcanic soil on Steens Mountain. Although I collected no voucher specimens at these sites, others have (on the road to Lily Lake: L.S. Smith, 1918, JEPS27101; at the crest of Fandango Pass: Alice Eastwood and J.T. Howell, 1940, POM260726; in the hills above Cedar Pass: Owenby and Meyer, 1940, VC705857; Steens Mt., Arthur Cronquist 8593; Steens Mt., June 30, 1959; WTU 207602).

Significance. The new Mt. Eddy location is the westernmost observation of this species. Even more importantly, it has not been reported previously from Mt. Eddy or the Klamath Mountains (Smith 2010; Smith and Sawyer 2010). Mt. Eddy is a botanical hotspot in northern California and has been a destination for hikers, campers, and naturalists for many decades. FR 42N17 is the main route to the heavily used trailhead to Mt. Eddy's summit. With such heavy traffic for so many years, it is puzzling that *S. cordatus* has not previously been reported at this site.

There are two plausible reasons why *S. cordatus* on FR 42N17 to Mt. Eddy has been unreported until now. First, it may have been overlooked since dangerous road conditions make stopping at this spot challenging. Second, the species might have been

observed at this site, but it was neither collected, nor reported. The simplest explanation is that few people stop along this dangerous stretch of road near the population of *S. cordatus*. The inaccessibility is compounded by the presence of a morphologically similar congener, further reducing the chances of detecting this species. Yet, at least two other botanists (Nick Jensen [Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden] and Ryan O'Dell [Bureau of Land Management], personal communications) have noted *S. cordatus* from this site, but this is the first reported collection of this species from this location.

Detecting *S. cordatus* along FR 42N17 is difficult for two reasons: First, access to the site requires a level of risk that most drivers would probably find unacceptable. The road is narrow with a steep drop-off, making it appear to be unsafe to park. Second, the gross morphological similarity of *S. cordatus* to *S. barbatus* S. Watson, a co-occurring congener and resident endemic crucifer, might conceal its presence. Easily distinguished from one another at close range, *S. cordatus* and *S. barbatus* have a similar habit and can be mistaken from a distance. Both species are of similar height and have leathery to succulent stems and leaves. The cauline leaves are reduced upward and do not reach the inflorescence. The flowers are initially confined to the top of the stem, deploying along its upper reaches with maturity. The two species are so similar in habit that I failed to detect the presence of *S. cordatus* even after some hours photographing *S. barbatus* along the roadcut in 2003. When reviewing the photos later, I saw in the background a blurred image that reminded me of *S. cordatus*. I returned to the site the next day to confirm that the image was of *S. cordatus* and saw that there were quite a few *S. cordatus* plants scattered among the *S. barbatus*, none of which I had noticed the day before.

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